

NEW LOOK
WYCOMBE
ON TARGET

WYCOMBE Wanderers recorded their sixth Rothmans Isthmian League victory of the season — their fifth away from home — when they produced a vastly improved performance at Kingstonian on Tuesday night to move up to fourth place in Division One.

The Blues hit a new low on Saturday when they went down to Hitchin and with the injured Horseman, Maskell, Birdseye and Pearson all out of action at Richmond Road, their chances of maximum points looked slim.

But manager Ted Powell gambled... and won. He played a 4-2-4 formation with Howard Kennedy and Mick Holifield moving up from midfield while John Priestley switched to the

Kingstonian 1, Wycombe Wanderers 3 REPORT BY STUART EARP

front line with Dylan Evans. Priestley, a strong, bustling player, obviously enjoyed the move while Evans had one of his best games of the season. Kennedy bagged a brace of goals, his second a superbly taken effort.

It must be said, however, that Wanderers once again had their fair share of luck. Kingstonian were full of confidence after Saturday's 4-1 win at Walthamstow and attacked Wycombe at a frantic pace. They had at least half a dozen chances to score in the first half and also hit the woodwork twice with goalkeeper Peter Spittle beaten. But superior fitness told in the end as Wanderers finished the stronger side.

Particularly pleasing was the

amount of effort put in by the Blues. Every one of the players gave 100 per cent and although they came in for some fierce pressure, notably from corners, they stood up to their opponents and fought like tigers.

Kingstonian forced their first of 14 corners (Wycombe had two) in the opening minutes. From the kick Mick Sorenson struck his back pass too firmly and Spittle was forced to palm the ball out. Kingstonian had the ball in the net seconds later but the effort was ruled out for an infringement.

Wanderers matched the home side's tremendous pace and Dave Collyer raced out to save at Holifield's feet in the seventh minute. A minute later Priestley turned in an angled

shot which Collyer saved well while at the other end Tony White headed a good chance straight at Spittle.

Three successive corners put Wycombe under considerable pressure and after 19 minutes White should have scored when Alan Phillips miscued a back pass. White's first time shot was well wide of the target. Nevertheless the West Indian who had a short stay with Wycombe after joining from West Ham, looked a dangerous player.

KENNEDY SCORES

It was against the run of play that Wycombe took the lead after 24 minutes. John Field was caught in possession on his own bye-line and the ball was played across the box to Alan Davies. He squared the ball into the middle where Kennedy slotted home.

The goal gave Wanderers more confidence and they began to break down the Kingstonian defence which operated five men across the back in a strange 5-2-3 formation. The extra man in defence could not stop the Blues second goal, however. Keith Mead pushed the ball upfield and a clever flick caught the defence square. Priestley timed his run beautifully and finished the move with a chip over the advancing Collyer's body.

Kingstonian were far from finished, however, and after Spittle had pulled off a brilliant save from Tony Field Wanderers were pegged back to 2-1. From a corner White rose above the defence at the far post and headed home from an oblique angle.

Tony Field and Gavin Fraser were lectured by referee Richardson after one clash but Fraser's terrier like work in midfield served the Blues well.

The second half was played at a more gentle pace as both teams tired but it was pleasing to see Wycombe stringing four or five passes together to create moves out of defence. Early on, however, the pressure was still firmly on.

Kingstonian were desperately unlucky in the opening seconds when Micky Cook's swerving free kick thudded against the underside of the crossbar and they forced four rapid corners to keep the visitors firmly on the rack.

But Wanderers held on and began to hit back with interest. In the 78th minute they went 3-1 up when Priestley gathered the ball on half way after a relieving clearance from defence. He ran on with the defence back pedalling and then slipped the ball through to Kennedy. Howard took his shot first time from 20 yards and sent in arching over the stranded Collyer and into the net — a superb goal. The match was a personal triumph for Kennedy who has had an inconsistent season to date. On this form he looks a class player and with a little more consistency his place in the side would be automatic.

There was still time for Kingstonian to get back into the game as they did in the corresponding game two years ago. But their luck was right out on Tuesday and there were cries of anguish when Cook hit the post for the second time in the 88th minute. His superb volley left Spittle helpless but the ball crashed against an upright and was cleared.

KINGSTONIAN: D. Collyer; P. Dade, A. Mahon, J. Field, D. Dyer, B. Webb; A. Field, A. Horstead; T. Waughman, M. Cook, A. White. Sub P. Procter (not used).

WYCOMBE: P. Spittle; M. Sorenson, K. Mead, A. Phillips, R. Davies; A. Davies, G. Fraser; J. Priestley, D. Evans, H. Kennedy, M. Holifield, Sub D. Bullock (not used).

Referee: M. Richardson (Chislehurst).
Half-time: 1-2. **Goalscorers:** Wycombe — Kennedy 2 (24, 78), Priestley (36). Kingstonian — White (42).